



LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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TO: Jeannine Durkin, Acting Superintendent of Schools
FROM: Ingrid Markman, District Social Worker
RE: Response to Motion
DATE: January 31, 2019

This report is in response to the following motion made by School Committee Member Robert Hoey during the January 16, 2019 School Committee Meeting:

“Requesting that the Administration provides the Committee with a report on how many 51As have been filed by schools for the 2018-2019 school year and for what reasons.”

51As filed district-wide between November 2017 and December 2018:

Between November 27, 2017 and February 2, 2018 there were 127 51As filed by school Social Workers across the District.

Between September 1, 2018 and December 30, 2018 (January data is not complete), there were 179 51As filed by school Social Workers across the District.

All staff in the Lowell Public Schools are mandated reporters. As such, there are situations when we are required by law to file even when believe that a particular incident does not meet the standard of abuse or neglect. DCFs role is to investigate the allegations and our role is to report them whether we believe said allegations are true or not. In addition, we do not believe it is fitting to disclose reasons for 51As as often times they are screened out by DCF, because they are unsupported. We are concerned that by sharing reasons why 51As were filed, we could be wrongly or incorrectly suggesting that students, staff and families did something wrong or illegal, which is often not the case.